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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/768,310	01/30/2004	James Robert Dupuy	018778-9224	6329
1131	7590	09/24/2004	EXAMINER	
MICHAEL BEST & FRIEDRICH LLC 401 NORTH MICHIGAN AVENUE SUITE 1900 CHICAGO, IL 60611-4212			BRAHAN, THOMAS J	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
				3652

DATE MAILED: 09/24/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/768,310	DUPUY ET AL. <i>MW</i>	
	Examiner	Art Unit	3652
	Thomas J. Braham		

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ . |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>Jan 30, 2004</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ . |

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1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The scope of claim 4 is unclear, as claim 4 is drawn to just a lifting mechanism but it depends from claim 1 which is drawn to a method of providing wheelchair access to a vehicle. It is unclear as to how an apparatus claim can depend from only a portion of a method claim.

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. § 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention there by the applicant for patent.

4. Claims 1-5, as best understood, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ringdahl et al. Ringdahl et al shows a method for providing access to a vehicle from a platform structure of a wheelchair lift, comprising:

providing a lifting mechanism (motor 64, pivot arms 84 and 92, channel beam 93, and other elements) to raise and lower the platform structure (8) between a ground level position and a transfer level position;

providing a plate (proximal barrier 16) pivotally coupled to the inboard end of the platform structure;

providing an articulated lever assembly (follower arm 124 and cable mechanism 130) coupled between a vertical arm (channel beam 93) of the lifting mechanism and an inboard end of the platform structure (8);

raising the platform structure with the lifting mechanism to the transfer level position wherein the articulated lever assembly contacts the lifting mechanism; and

moving the plate from a raised safety barrier position to a lowered bridging position extending between the platform structure and the vehicle by the contact of the articulated lever assembly (at the follower arm 124) with the lifting mechanism (at cam finger 120 of the lifting mechanism).

Removing the contact between the follower arm (124) and the cam finger (120) moves the proximal barrier plate (16) to the raised position, as recited in claim 2. The plate remains in the bridging position as the platform is pivoted, for a short duration, as recited in claim 3. The lifting mechanism is a parallelogram structure, as claim 4 is best understood.

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5. Claims 1-5, as best understood, are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of double patenting over claim 1 of U. S. Patent No. 6,238,169 since the claims, if allowed, would improperly extend the "right to exclude" already granted in the patent. The subject matter claimed in the instant application is fully disclosed in the patent and is covered by that patent since the patent and the application are claiming common subject matter with respect to the apparatus claim(s), while the method claims rely on the same structural features of the apparatus claim(s) for patentability, with all of the claims varying only slightly in scope from claim 1 of the earlier patent. Furthermore, there is no apparent reason why applicant was prevented from presenting claims corresponding to those of the instant application during prosecution of the application which matured into a patent. See *In re Schneller*, 397 F.2d 350, 158 USPQ 210 (CCPA 1968). See also MPEP § 804.

6. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969). A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b). Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

7. An inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Thomas J. Braham at telephone number (703) 308-2568. The examiner's supervisor, Ms. Eileen Lillis, can be reached at (703) 308-3248. The fax number for all patent applications is (703) 872-9306.


Thomas J. Braham
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3652